

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 QUEBEC 00392 170038Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /071 W
----- 036211 /63

P 161755Z DEC 76
FM AMCONSUL QUEBEC
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0841
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMCONSUL MONTREAL PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L QUEBEC 0392

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, CA
SUBJECT: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH JUDGE ROBERT CLICHE

REF: QUEBEC 0384

1. SUMMARY: IN A DECEMBER 15 LUNCHEON CONVERSATION, JUDGE ROBERT CLICHE - HEAD OF THE 1974-75 CLICHE COMMISSION INQUIRY INTO ORGANIZED LABOR AND NOTED POLITICAL OBSERVER - APPLAUDED LEVESQUE'S PERFORMANCE IN OTTAWA, EXPRESSED OPINION THAT US NEED NOT BE WORRIED ABOUT QUEBEC DEVELOPMENTS, DISCUSSED THE STATE OF THE PARTI QUEBECOIS NOW THAT IT FORMS GOVERNMENT, AND PREDICTED UNION NATIONALE WILL SURPASS LIBERALS IN NEXT PROVINCIAL ELECTION. IN FEDERAL POLITICS, JUDGE CLICHE PREDICTS A LARGE GAIN BY CREDITISTES IN NEXT ELECTION. CLICHE FORESEES A SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN GOQ AND QUEBEC FEDERATION OF LABOR NOW THAT PQ FORMS GOVERNMENT. HOWEVER, RELATIONS WITH CONFEDERATION OF NATIONAL TRADE UNIONS AND TEACHERS UNIONS COULD CONTINUE TO BE DIFFICULT. END SUMMARY.

2. JUDGE CLICHE BEGAN BY NOTING A NEW FUTURE WAS OPENED UP FOR QUEBEC ON NOVEMBER 15. HE SAID THAT LEVESQUE WILL HAVE THE REFERENDUM IN ABOUT TWO YEARS, THERE BEING NO WAY HE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 QUEBEC 00392 170038Z

COULD AVOID IT EVEN IF HE WANTED TO DO SO. CLICHE BELIEVES THAT OTTAWA'S ACTIONS AND ATTITUDES WILL DETERMINE THE OUTCOME RATHER THAN ANYTHING DONE IN QUEBEC. HE QUESTIONED WHETHER TRUDEAU COULD BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE QUEBEC'S DESIRES. HE IS CERTAIN THAT CLARK WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO ACCOMMODATE QUEBEC AS CLARK, ALTHOUGH VERY INTELIGENT, LACKS THE NECESSARY

AUDACITY TO ENVISION AND EXECUTE MOVEMENT TOWARD A NEW RELATIONSHIP. TRUDEAU HAS SHOWN AUDACITY IN PAST SITUATIONS, BUT CLICHE QUESTIONS THAT HIS PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE IS RELEVANT FOR WHAT LIES HEAD. CLICHE'S BIGGEST CONCERN IS THAT AN "ANGLO PALACE REVOLT" WILL OUST TRUDEAU AND INSTALL TURNER. THAT WOULD BE BAD FOR ALL CONCERNED, HE CONCLUDED.

3. LEVESQUE'S OPENING STATEMENTS TO THE PREMIERS' MEETING RECEIVED HIGH PRAISE FROM CLICHE AS A STATEMENT WHICH MAKES ALL QUEBECOIS PROUD. HE SAID LEVESQUE'S CONCERN WILL BE TO KEEP HIMSELF IN THE POSITION OF SAYING YES OR NO TO OTTAWA'S PROPOSITIONS. AS SUCH, HE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE LAST WORD AND OTTAWA WILL BE PLACED IN ROLE OF PLEADER. IN RESPONSE TO MY DOUBTS, CLICHE SAID OTTAWA CANNOT OUTWAIT QUEBEC AS DAILY BUSINESS WILL FORCE OTTAWA TO PUT FORWARD VARIOUS PROPOSITIONS IN DIFFERENT AREAS. STRATEGY WORKED WELL THIS WEEK, CLICHE OBSERVED, AS LEVESQUE MADE HONEST EFFORT TOGETHER WITH OTHER PREMIERS, THEN WAS ABLE TO RIDICULE RESULTS STATING THAT QUEBEC WAS LOSING 110 MILLION DOLLARS AND DEPART. IN BETWEEN SUCH MEETINGS, LEVESQUE CAN SIT IN QUEBEC CITY AND CRITICIZE ALL FACETS OF OTTAWA'S POLICIES. LEVESQUE'S STRATEGY, CLICHE STATED, IS BASED ON FEELING THAT TRUDEAU WILL REMAIN RATHER UNYIELDING. IN THAT RESPECT, PREMIERS' CONFERENCE PRODUCED NO SURPRISE. SHOULD TRUDEAU BECOME MORE ADAPTABLE AND SHOW MORE UNDERSTANDING OF QUEBEC REALITIES, CLICHE FEELS THAT LEVESQUE WILL HAVE TO RETHINK HIS APPROACH.

4. JUDGE CLICHE ASKED IF THE US WAS WORRIED ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE QUEBEC ELECTION. I TOLD HIM THAT WE WERE INTERESTED AS A NEIGHBOR BUT NOT WORRIED AS IT WAS A DOMESTIC CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 QUEBEC 00392 170038Z

CANADIAN AFFAIR AND THEREFORE NONE OF OUR BUSINESS. HE REPLIED THAT WE HAD NO REASON TO BE WORRIED ANYWAY AS LEVESQUE WAS A GOOD, RELIABLE MAN IN WHOM EVERYONE COULD HAVE CONFIDENCE. HE EXPECTS LEVESQUE TO CALM THE ANXIETIES OF WALL STREET WHEN HE GOES TO NEW YORK IN JANUARY.

5. IN A LOOSELY-STRUCTURED DISCUSSION OF THE NOVEMBER 15 AFTERMATH, CLICHE MADE FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS: THIS GOVERNMENT IS THE BEST EVER ASSEMBLED IN QUEBEC, "REALLY BRILLIANT." THESE MINISTERS SPEAK ENGLISH BETTER THAN THOSE IN LIBERAL GOVERNMENT AND ARE SINCERELY WORRIED ABOUT CONTACT WITH ENGLISH COMMUNITY ALTHOUGH THEY COULD JUST AS WELL TURN THEIR BACK ON ENGLISH. LEVESQUE WILL HAVE TROUBLE WITH RADICAL WING AND YOUTH AMONG PARTY MILITANTS IN ABOUT 2-3 YEARS AS CRITICISM BASED ON IDEOLOGY AND IMPATIENCE OF YOUTH WILL BEGIN TO BUILD. PQ MAY BE IN POSITION WHERE IT COULD WELL WIN REFERENDUM ON INDEPENDENCE JUST BY GOVERNING WELL - NO MATTER WHAT OTTAWA DOES. POPULATION WILL GET USED TO HAVING PQ GOVERNMENT

AROUND, HE FEELS. FURTHERMORE, PEOPLE HAVE LIVED WITH FEAR OF SEPARATION FOR SO LONG THAT ITS EVOCATION NO LONGER FRIGHTENS THEM AS BOURASSA DISCOVERED IN CAMPAIGN. CLICHE FEELS ELECTIONS BROUGHT REAL PSYCHOLOGICAL BOOST TO QUEBECOIS WHO DISCARDED THEIR MINORITY COMPLEXES IN ONE DAY. HE NOTED PEOPLE ARE GENERALLY HAPPIER AND MORE SELF-CONFIDENT. THEY THINK THAT THEY DEMONSTRATED THEY COULD ASSERT THEMSELVES AND, AS A RESULT, HAVE THROWN THE ANGLOS INTO A QUANDRY. THEY NOW HAVE THE FEELING THAT ANGLOS ARE NO LONGER RUNNING THEIR AFFAIRS.

6. IN DISCUSSING THE OPPOSITION PARTIES, CLICHE SAID THAT ANOTHER ELECTION TODAY WOULD RESULT IN UNION NATIONALE FORMING OFFICIAL OPPOSITION RATHER THAN LIBERALS. LIBERALS ARE IN SERIOUS DISARRAY AND WITH 8 (SIC) ANGLOPHONE DEPUTIES OUT OF 27 ARE BEING INCREASINGLY PERCEIVED AS ENGLISH PARTY AND/OR AS ANNEX TO FEDERAL LIBERALS. HE FEELS THAT THIS WILL CHANGE ONLY WHEN TRUDEAU LEAVES FEDERAL SCENE. HE SAID THAT GERARD D. LEVESQUE IS A STEADY PERFORMER WITH GOOD JUDGMENT, HENCE CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 QUEBEC 00392 170038Z

PERFECT FOR INTERIM LIBERAL LEADER. HE PREDICTED THAT UN IS ON UPSWING AND WILL BE PARTY TO BEAT LEVESQUE IN NEXT ELECTION IF PREMIER CAN BE BEATEN. THIS APPEARS TO BE DUE TO LIBERAL COLLAPSE MORE THAN UN STRENGTH. HE CONCLUDED THAT UN HAD NO REASON TO WORK CLOSELY WITH LIBERALS IN OPPOSING PQ. THEY WILL BOTH OPPOSE INDEPENDENCE IN REFERENDUM BUT WITH QUITE DIFFERENT WORDING.

7. JUDGE CLICHE EXPECTS THE LIBERALS TO WIN FOUR UPCOMING FEDERAL BYELECTIONS IN QUEBEC AND TRUDEAU TO JUDGE FROM RESULTS THAT HE REMAINS STRONG IN QUEBEC. HOWEVER, CLICHE BELIEVES THIS WILL BE MISTAKE AS HE EXPECTS LARGE CREDITISTE BREAKTHROUGH IN NEXT FEDERAL ELECTION. HE FORESEES CREDITISTE WINNING 25-50 SEATS DEPENDING ON CIRCUMSTANCES. NOTING MY UNDISGUISED SURPRISE, HE SAID THIS WILL COME ABOUT FOR FOUR REASONS; CREDITISTES ARE AUTHENTIC QUEBECOIS AND HAVE ALREADY (RENE MATTE) CLEVERLY POSITIONED THEMSELVES TO SPEAK FOR PQ IN OTTAWA; DESIRE OF QUEBECOIS TO HAVE A GOOD LAUGH WHILE WEAKENING FEDERAL SYSTEM; CREDITISTE TENDENCY TO FOLLOW DANGEROUS ANARCHICAL TRENDS AMONG QUEBECOIS AND TELL THEM WHAT THEY WANT TO HEAR; AND EXPECTATION THAT PQ WILL CONDUCT A WHISPERING CAMPAIGN TO SUPPORT CREDITISTES MUCH AS THEY DID FOR CONSERVATIVES IN 1975 HOCHELAGA BYELECTION.

8. I ASKED CLICHE WHAT GOVERNMENT-LABOR RELATIONS WOULD BE LIKE UNDER NEW REGIME. HE EXPECTS PQ GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH LABOR ON A BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT. HE SAID LEVESQUE LIKES JEAN GERIN-LAJOIE AND FERNAND DAOUST OF QUEBEC FEDERATION OF LABOR BUT DISLIKES MARCEL PEPIN AND YVON CHARBONNEAU OF CNTU AND QTC, HENCE HIS RELATIONS WITH LAST TWO CENTRALS

COULD BE DIFFICULT. LEVESQUE'S VISIT TO STEELWORKERS MEETING (REFTEL) WAS DESIGNED SPECIFICALLY - IN CLICHE'S OPINION - TO BACK LAJOIE'S CRITICISM OF MARXIST ELEMENTS IN TRADE UNIONS. LEVESQUE WELCOMES SUCH A CALL BECAUSE HE HIMSELF MUST DEAL WITH A SMALL BUT NOISY GROUP OF LEFTISTS IN PQ WHO, AS MENTIONED ABOVE, COULD GIVE HIM TROUBLE AFTER HONEYMOON
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 QUEBEC 00392 170038Z

PERIOD IS OVER.

9. COMMENT; CLICHE IS WELL-CONNECTED POLITICALLY AND KNOWS MOST OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT ON A FIRST-NAME BASIS. WHILE NOT PEQUISTE HIMSELF, HE OBVIOUSLY IS ELATED AT THEIR VICTORY AND EXPECTS GREAT THINGS FROM THEIR GOVERNMENT. HIS VIEWS ON SUCH ITEMS AS PROVINCIAL POLITICS, LABOR PROBLEMS, AND PERSONALITIES ARE CLOSE TO COMMONLY-HELD VIEWS HERE BUT HIS PREDICTION ON FEDERAL ELECTIONS WAS STARTLING; BUBNOT ILLOGICAL GIVEN VOLATILE NATURE OF QUEBEC ELECTORATE WHICH TURNED TO CREDITISTES (1962) ONCE BEFORE TO EXPRESS AMBIVALENCE TOWARD FEDERAL POLITICS. CLICHE APPEARED SINCERELY WORRIED THAT US WILL ATTEMPT EVENTUALLY TO BLOCK QUEBEC'S INDEPENDENCE. HE DID NOT SEEM OVERLY IMPRESSED WITH MY ASSURANCE THAT THIS WAS A DOMESTIC CANADIAN MATTER. CLICHE - AS EVERYONE ELSE IN QUEBEC - IS STILL SORTING OUT HIS IDEAS ON DIRECTION FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS WILL NOW TAKE. ONE IS HARD PRESSED TO BE AS SURE AS HE IS THAT ALL CARDS ARE IN QUEBEC'S HAND, ALTHOUGH ONE CAN SURMISE THAT QUEBEC IS IN A STRONGER POSITION THAN OTTAWA.
GARLAND

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION, MEETING REPORTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976QUEBEC00392
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760463-0924
From: QUEBEC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761237/aaaabflk.tel
Line Count: 202
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 QUEBEC 384
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TOUR D'HORIZON WITH JUDGE ROBERT CLICHE
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, CA, US, (CLICHE, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006